



Multidisciplinary Vulvodynia Program

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General Skin Care Recommendations

1. Avoid chemicals that can irritate the vulvar skin – soap, douches, perfumes, and over-the-counter vaginal preparations or feminine hygiene spray.
2. Use soap substitutes (Use gentle cleansers that are labeled “hypoallergenic” like Cetaphil, Dove or Aveeno brands.)
3. Do not add fabric softener to clothes.
4. Do NOT use synthetic panty liners for menstruation or daily wear.
5. Use 100 % Cotton pads (Natracare pads or tampons). Or use a menstrual cup – DivaCup, Keeper cup (rubber) or Moon cup (silicone). Reusable cotton pads are available through many health food stores. Makers of all cotton cloth menstrual pads – Glad Rags (503-238-8624); www.gladrags.com,
6. Avoid contact with synthetic material – use cotton underwear, pantyhose with cotton panels.
7. Wear loose clothing that encourages the air to circulate. Sleep without underwear.
8. Use a sexual lubricant before and during intercourse as needed. These are labeled as “personal lubricants” and are liquid. Do not use gels. Examples of good lubricants include: Astroglide, KY Sensual Silk, O My Lubricant. These are all available at most drugstores.
9. For optimal skin care use a moisturizer after a shower on the vulvar skin. Examples of good moisturizers include Clinaderm, Lubriderm, and Glaxal base. Replens is a vaginal moisturizer that can also act as a lubricant.
10. Use a protective barrier such a Vaseline jelly or Penaten cream on sensitive skin areas.

If it hurts:

1. If the discomfort with sexual intercourse is mild try applying a freezing gel (xylocaine 2%) to the vestibule 5 minutes prior to intercourse.
2. After intercourse, sit on the toilet and pour cool water over the vulva. Some women find applying a cold ice pack or gel pack to the vulva for 5 minutes helps.
3. Do not scratch the vulvar skin. If the itch is bothersome try rinsing. Try applying an ice pack or a moisturizer (e.g. Clinaderm) or barrier cream (e.g. Vaseline ointment).
4. If it hurts when urinating, try rinsing during or after urination. If you can not urinate because it is too painful, sit in a bath and then try urinating – the bath water will dilute the acidic urine and make it more comfortable.